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DOGS AND THEIR AFFECTIONS.

BY OUIDA.

AN ENGLISH writer has declared that, in view of the moral advantages which man enjoys from constant intimacy with the dog, the former has not derived all the benefits he might have done from contact with the latter. This is one of those jests which is not without its substance and suggestion in fact. The dog does continually display qualities from which man may with advantage mould his own conduct, and in unselfishness the canine animal leaves the human animal far behind him.

There is a charming story by Louis Enault, called the "*Chien du Capitaine*," which I should wish every one who cares for dogs to read, and which would, even in those who do not care for them, awaken sympathy with the loyal, rough-coated, four-footed hero in his troublous Odyssey from Senegal to Normandy. A French critic once gravely objected to a story of this kind on the score that *un chien ne pourrait pas penser*. Now, that a dog can and does think, and think to much purpose, there can be no doubt whatever in those who have studied dogs in life with sympathy and attention. I am quite sure that a dog thinks in exactly the same manner as ourselves, although in a different measure. Sight and hearing being supplemented in him by that wonderful sensibility of the olfactory nerves conferring on him a sixth sense of which we can form but a very vague conception, the dog's views, actions, antipathies, attachments, and judgment of all events, places, and persons are colored and guided by what this delicate and marvellous set of nerves tells him about them. The physiologist who destroyed the nerves of a dog's nose destroyed in him all powers of discrimination, selection, and attachment, and, without the cruel operation, might have known that he would do so. It is impossible for us to measure the innumerable and sensitive impressions conveyed by the olfactory nerves to the canine brain; but that on receiving these impressions this brain thinks exactly as the human brain thinks there can be no doubt in any one who is accustomed to study dogs. I have seen a dog stand-

ing in a doorway looking up and down and pondering which way it would be most agreeable to take, precisely as a loungeur will stand on the steps of his club and meditate whether he shall turn to the right or to the left.

Dogs have very strongly-marked volition, inclination, and powers of choice, and their wishes are too often neglected and set aside or brutally thwarted. The general idea of a well-brought-up dog is a dog that is cowed out of all will of his own ; but it is only in leaving the animal much of his own will that the interesting characteristics of his idiosyncrasy can be studied and enjoyed. A dog who is afraid is a dog who has been robbed of the frank charm of his original temper ; he becomes hesitating and sad, if he does not become sullen, and is so timid lest he should offend that all his delightful impulsiveness disappears ; instead of a varied and most interesting individuality, you have a mere machine wound up and moved by the single spring of fear.

Men too often forget that all which they command is against the nature of the dog, opposed to his instincts, oppressive to his desires ; and they should be infinitely more gentle and forbearing than they are in the imposition of their orders. The most entirely amusing, delightful, and affectionate dogs that I have ever known have been the most completely insubordinate. They were tiresome, no doubt, sometimes ; but, in compensation, how droll, how interesting, how devoted, how beautiful in their lithe, free attitudes, how gay and how good-humored in their sportiveness !

With our dogs, as with our human friendships and affections, to enjoy much we must sacrifice something. We must like the animal for himself as well as for ourselves. There is as much difference in the characters of dogs as in those of men. I have known many, but I have never known two alike.

I see with utter disapprobation and regret all the tendency of modern times to make the dog into a chattel to gamble with in a minor degree as the horse is made in a greater sense. All the shows and prizes and competitions and heartburnings, all the advertisements of stud dogs and pedigrees and cups won by this dog and by that, are injurious to the dog himself, tend to make external points in him of a value wholly fictitious, and to induce his owners to view him with feelings varying in ratio with his success or failure at exhibitions. The physical sufferings endured by dogs at these shows, the long journeys, the privations, the separation from

places and persons dear to them, the anxiety and sorrow entailed on them,—all these things are injurious to them and are ill compensated by the questionable good done to the race by the dubious value of conflicting verdicts on the excellence of breed and form.

The Maltese (called in French the Havanais) dog has been ruined in England by the absurd decree of the judges at dog-shows that the hair of this breed should have no curl or wave in it. On the contrary, a perfect Maltese or lion-dog should have undulating hair, fine and soft as floss silk, curling at the ends and when brushed out surrounding his body with a snowy cloud.

This most beautiful of all small dogs was a fashionable pet from the days of Louis XIII. to the Revolution, and in all pictures in which he is portrayed (he was termed *chien du manchon*) the hair is waving and curling at the ends. The decree also of dog-show judges that there should be no fawn in the ears is an error; for in the most perfect specimens of this breed, which are to be found in Italy, the fawn-colored tips are often seen. I wish that I could restore the exquisite lion-dog to its place in fashion, usurped so unfittingly by the squat, clumsy, deformed dachshund, who is as ugly as he is out of place on the cushion of a carriage or a boudoir. The lion-dog is admirable, beautiful, and his aristocratic appearance, his little face which has a look of Gainsborough's and Reynolds's children, his white silken coat, and his descent from the darlings of Versailles and Whitehall, all make him an ideal dog for women. He is of high courage and of great intelligence; take him all in all, there is no dog his equal, and this little tender patrician will fight till he drops.

The dog I have cared most for in my life was of this breed; his name, Ali, had been corrupted into Lili; he was lovely to the sight, passionately devoted in affection, and of incomparable courage. He lived with me for nine years, which were as happy years to him as it was possible for a dog to know, and he lies in his last sleep between two magnolia-trees under a marble sun-dial, on whose base a famous and noble poet has written his epitaph:

“*Ecquid est quod jure docemus amabile?*

Nos amat, et nobis esse fidele potest,

Lili, pelle canis, data sunt tibi pelle sub ista,

Digna fides hominis pectore dignus Amor.”

Which for the unlearned may be roughly translated as meaning that there is nothing so precious to us as the heart which loves

and responds to ours, and that such a heart was Lili's, although clothed in a canine form.

The Maltese, the most patrician of all small dogs, was, as I have said, at the height of his fashion in the years immediately preceding the French Revolution, and the little dog with which the poor little dauphin used to play in the gardens of Tuileries was of this race. What became of this royal pet? How many poor little pet dogs must have been left to starve and shiver homeless in those dread years, whilst their graceful and stately mistresses and masters were dragged in the tumbril to the scaffold! Dogs suffer from the *contre-coup* of all human misfortunes; and when death or adversity breaks up a home, the dog who was happy in it is one of the first and greatest losers by the calamity.

Not long ago in Paris a poor acrobat died, unknown and unregarded except by the three dogs who had belonged to and performed with him in the streets, a greyhound, a poodle, and a water-spaniel. These three poor mourners followed his coffin to its pauper's rest, and when the earth was thrown in on him they waited about the spot mournfully until the guardian of the place chased them away; and then they quietly, with their heads and tails hung low, went back into the crowds of the great city which had no home in it all for them. What became of them? One shudders to think of the torture-trough of the physiologists which was probably their doom. I learned their story too late to be able to trace and find them. Very likely the dead man had been a brute to them; but they had loved him.

The black poodle has almost superseded the larger white poodle in the affections of society; yet the white one is incomparably the finer animal. The big white poodles of Florence are very handsome and marvellously clever; but, poor fellows! they are not "in demand," and therefore they grow rarer every year. The Pomeranian is a most charming small dog, and his high spirit and extreme intelligence make him a very valuable guard. There is an electric quality in his hair which repels dust and dirt; and in intensity of attachment he cannot be surpassed. The Italian *lupetto* is often mistaken for a Pomeranian, but there is a marked difference between them. The *lupetto* does not possess the thick, short, woolly undercoat which is the characteristic of the Pomeranian, and his hair droops, while the Pomeranian's stands out from his body. The *lupetto* is, there can be no doubt, the

same breed of dog as was especially sacrificed in the Floralian games in classic Rome : at that time the Pomeranian was peaceably leading a wild and free life in the dread solitudes of those chilly lands in which Ovid fretted his heart out till it broke.

A very beautiful dog little known outside his country is the Siberian greyhound : of great size, with all the greyhound's elegance and swiftness, but with long silky hair, usually of a silvery whiteness or of a silvery grey, and a plumed tail like a large ostrich feather, this most graceful of all dogs is of incomparable beauty and deserves to be known on this side of the Caucasus.

The Siberian and the Persian greyhounds are one and the same breed ; called *sleughi* in Persia and Arabia, and famous for being sent out to the chase alone. In speed this dog can outstrip the antelope and in tenacity he out-tires the tiger. Yet when brought into domesticity as a house-dog he is gentle and interesting, and forms a most picturesque ornament lying on a bearskin in a hall or *salon*. He has the black, melting, soft eye of the eastern, and the finest tapering muzzle, with small cocked, pendent ears. He is much larger than the European greyhound or deerhound. An exhibition of these dogs in Petersburg is a most picturesque sight, accompanied as they are by their Circassian or Persian huntsmen, and usually lying on scarlet carpet laid down to set off their contours and the silvery hue of their hair : a very different spectacle from the painful exhibitions of dog-shows in other countries.

As the German workman is everywhere in both hemispheres elbowing out the Englishman and Frenchman and American, so the Ulmhound and the dachshund are displacing the Maltese, the King Charles, the Blenheim, the water-spaniel, the Italian greyhound, and others. The Blenheim spaniel is a beautiful little dog, greatly neglected, whilst squab, unlovely Japanese, and bandy-legged basset hounds hold public favor, merely because they are something new and grotesque. All the handsome old breeds of spaniels grow rarer every day, and the ugly, short-haired German breeds, large and small, are pushed into public favor. The popularity of the dachshund, which would be inexplicable except that fashion can make fools of its followers as *Puck* of *Bottom*, has a disastrous effect on other breeds which better merit such honor, not only by the exclusion of these from happy homes, but by the influence which their deformity exercises on female dogs. The female is easily influenced through her eyes ; without any contact with her,

a dog which takes her fancy will influence the appearance of the puppies with which she is already pregnant, and the bandy legs of the dachshund are becoming terribly traceable in breeds with which he has nothing to do. Let us hope that the caprices of society will soon send him back to the earth-stopping and badger-drawing which are his natural occupations, and restore the beautiful, aristocratic, long-haired races to their proper place in hall and palace. The liking for short-haired dogs grows out of laziness ; the long-haired breeds take more time to wash and comb and keep clean, and so they fall out of public favor. Yet what is more delightful in all dogdom than a Skye terrier, with his shining eyes in a mop of hair, or what more admirable in dignity and grandeur than a Newfoundland, with the snow or the sea foam on his curls ?

I once owned the grandest and biggest Newfoundland in Europe. He was bigger than the Prince of Wales's then famous Cabot ; he was truly a monument of beauty and of strength ; and when for dinner-parties he wore a broad blue garter ribbon, he looked indeed a very king of dogs. Withal gentle as a dove, playful as a child, using his immense strength as lightly as his own seas will toy with a summer breeze ; good-natured and generous to other dogs ; kind to women and children ; to man good-humoredly indifferent ; a tireless swimmer in any seas, swimming so matchlessly that it was beautiful to watch him fighting his way through angry breakers. " All that for a dawg !" said a London rough who saw his body being laid in its coffin ; and the dead dog was a grander creature than the living brute who jeered at him.

Many memories of dogs that I have loved come to me as I write—dear, kind, forgiving, and too short-lived friends ! We are not grateful enough to dogs ; not patient enough or generous enough ; and when they give us their whole souls, we cast them grudgingly a crumb of thought.

It has often been mooted as a vexed question why all men of genius or greatness are so fond of dogs. The reason is not far to seek. Those who are great or eminent in any way find the world full of parasites, toadies, liars, fawners, hypocrites : the incorruptible candor, loyalty, and honor of the dog are to such like water in a barren place to the thirsty traveller. The sympathy of your dog is unfailing and unobtrusive. If you are sad, so is

he ; and if you are merry, none is so willing to leap and laugh with you as he. For your dog you are never poor ; for your dog you are never old ; whether you are in a palace or a cottage he does not care ; and fall you as low as you may, you are his providence and his idol still. The attachment of the dog to man outweighs and almost obliterates attachment in him to his own race. There is something shocking to our high opinion of him in the callousness with which he will sniff at the stiff body of a brother-dog : he will follow his master to the grave, and sometimes die on it ; but the loss of his own kind leaves him unmoved.

I never knew more than one exception to this : it was, however, a noteworthy one. I had two puppies of the Molussus, commonly called the Maremma, breed ; large, white, very beautiful dogs, with long hair ; varying in size between a Newfoundland and a collie ; the old Greek race of watch-dogs to which, quite certainly, Argos belonged. These puppies, named Pan and Paris, lived together, fed, played, and slept together, and were never separated for a moment for seven months. In the seventh month Paris fell ill of distemper and died. Now, by my own observation I can declare that Pan nursed his brother as assiduously as any boy could have nursed another ; licked him, cleaned him, brought him tempting bits to eat ; did all that he could think of, and when his brother at last lay there cold and unresponsive to his efforts, his grief and astonishment were painful to see. From that time he ceased to play ; from being a very lively dog he grew grave and sad ; he had a wistful, wondering inquiry in his eyes which it was pathetic to behold ; and although he lived for many years after, and was as happy as a dog can be, he never recovered his spirits : he had buried his mirth in the grave of Paris. Something was lost for him with his brother which he never regained. This is the only instance I have known of a dog's love for another dog.

It is by his attachment to man that the dog has become the victim of man's (and women's) capricious fancies. The cat, distinctly inferior to the dog, has yet by sheer force of character kept for herself an extraordinary amount of personal liberty. No power of man has been able to restrain her from making night hideous with her amorous serenades ; from vagabondizing and brawling and hunting as she pleases. She is in civilization, but she is not of it ; at least, is so no more than she thinks it worth

her while to be ; she will accept its satin coverlid and its saucer of milk, but with the distinct reservation that she does not surrender the fair freedom of the housetop and the barbaric joy of the mouse's nest in the hedgerow. The egotism and philosophy of her character have preserved this charter for her; and the generous, impulsive, romantic, and devoted temper of the dog has, on the contrary, hurried and harried him into captivity. The cat is capable of attachment, too; but first and foremost is that determination to have her own way which procures for every egotist so much immunity and enjoyment, and is to the temperament in which it prevails as are his horn and armor to the rhinoceros. Who thinks of muzzling the cat? of chaining her? of taxing her? Heaven forbid that any one should, poor soul! but the fact remains that it is the pliability and docility of the dog's idiosyncrasy which have made him the subject of these persecutions. Man knows that his dog will forgive him anything; and he takes advantage of that long-suffering devotion. The dog suffers frightfully from being chained; but the moment he is loosed, instead of tearing to pieces those who chained him, he is solely occupied with expressing joy and gratitude at his release.

That it ever entered into the mind of man to chain a creature so vivacious, so mercurial, and so born for freedom as the dog, can only be explained by the facility with which human sophism reconciles itself to any brutality which it considers saves it trouble. The same diabolical selfishness which sets little children to work in factories and machine-rooms chains up the dog and leaves him to fret out his life in confinement. If legislation must meddle with dogs at all, would that it would make all muzzles and chains unlawful!

The veterinarian, Bénion, who is by no means tender to the dog, yet in his work on the "*Races Canines*" insists again and again on the hygienic necessity of absolute liberty for all dogs; averring that, unless they can take what exercise they like, it is impossible for them to satisfy their natural desires and wants. He speaks of the troops of dogs in Norway, in Newfoundland, and throughout the East, amongst which rabies is unknown, because, although subject to great privations, they are never deprived of their freedom, and males and females live together at their will. The muzzle, he properly declares, in preventing the dog from opening his jaws, hanging out his tongue, biting fleas, and from

all other natural movement of his jaws, is so pernicious that no other device of human cruelty is so imbecile and so ingenious.

The famous veterinarian, Mayhew, wrote again and again in a similar sense against chains and muzzles ; but prejudices die hard, and the prejudices of municipalities are tenacious and pernicious as thistles all over the world. The muzzle for dogs and the bearing-rein for horses commend themselves to men because they imagine their own safety is consulted in imposing them on the poor victims of their tyranny. Common-sense and humanity beat in vain against the closed doors of ignorance and cowardice.

The muzzle is the most ingenious, complete, and odious invention that can be conceived for obtaining the minimum of utility to the public with the maximum of torture to dogs. It torments and fevers the animal, and deprives those who own him of all pleasure in and use of him. The other day in a London police court a poor woman was arraigned for trying to drown herself ; she was a victim of the "sweating system," which had made her weary of her life ; a dog, passing by and seeing her drowning, had jumped in and brought her, still alive, to land. If a policeman had thus rescued her, the newspapers would have had innumerable paragraphs about his courage and humanity : the hero, being only "a passing dog," obtained no word of commendation from either journals or magistrate. Now, had this dog been impeded by a muzzle, he could not have saved the woman.

Not long ago, also in London, a retriever saved the lives of two little boys asleep in a burning house and lost his own life in going back for a third child ; the newspapers did say a little in admiration of this act, but only a line or two ; whereas they poured out columns of hysterical emotion over the sad fate of a nurse-maid who in a London fire did as much as this dog, but no more.

I believe that the quality of a dog's affection for his human friends is but little understood or appreciated by the people who are the objects of it : sincerity and constancy, so often absent from human attachments, are its invariable characteristics. It has the profundity and the *hysterio passio* of intense emotions. When the dog is treated like a mere chattel, sold from one buyer to another, hustled from place to place, and tortured by continual severance from those he cares for, he suffers intensely, and his whole *morale* undergoes deterioration. The best managed of the so-called dogs' homes can only be a dogs' purgatory—the transi-

tion place from happiness to hell. Strange sights, strange voices, strange beds, strange associates, are a torture to the dog to an extent which the lighter and more capricious temperament of humanity cannot comprehend. A child, if he be well fed, indulged, and caressed, is consoled with great celerity for separation from those he loves. Not so the dog. He literally prefers a dinner of herbs where love is to the stalled ox where his affections are starved.

I have a little Pomeranian who is, from age, quite blind, and quite deaf ; yet he is instantly aware of my presence, and follows me about with unerring accuracy ; to be happy he wants nothing more than to know that I am within his reach. This great love which survives the extinction of the senses, and which sheds a radiance on him through his darkness, has certainly in it all the highest attributes of spiritual affection. It is an error to suppose that dogs love those who feed them. I never feed this little dog ; and to the person who does feed him he is quite indifferent. His love is a purely spiritual and disinterested sentiment. When I stretch my hand out to him in a new glove, he is for a moment uncertain ; then remembering, evidently, that gloves go to the elbow, he sniffs at the top of my arm and satisfies himself thus of my identity. His antipathies are as strong as his attachments, and when any one whom he dislikes enters his presence, he is instantly aware of it, and “ goes for ” his enemy with unerring accuracy. He is both deaf and blind certainly ; but in virtue of that marvellous power of scent and intensity of emotion he is as active and animated as if his beautiful black eyes had light in them and his delicate pointed ears had sound. Poor little doggie, weighted with the ills that smote Milton and Beethoven ! Those great men could scarcely have had a greater soul than his.

And it is this greatness of soul which makes the dog so interesting, so mysterious, and so pathetic a personality to me, associated, as it is, with the frank animation of their bodies and the sad servitude in which they are generally kept by the human beings whom they adore. About the dog there is to me something of the faun, of the forest-god, of the mingling of divinity and brutality such as met in the shape of Pan, of an earlier, fresher, wilder world than ours ; and from the eyes of the dog, in their candid worship, in their wistful appeal, in their inscrutable profundity, there is an eternal and unanswerable reproach.

QUIDA,